

The Southern Counties

Dam Chimera

When a board of consulting geologists had finished examining the San Gabriel Dam site in the last week, they handed the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors a ten-page, typewritten report. And when the supervisors had read it, had digested its significance, they immediately issued an order to stop all work on the dam.

Reason: The report stated that there was no solid, safe rock foundation for the dam to rest upon. Poor rock conditions and the presence of faults, along with the "extreme recent activity in indicated," showed that the canyon floor would not hold immovable a dam of such height (425 feet) as the proposed one would be. (Aside from Boulder Dam, 600 feet), the proposed San Gabriel Dam is the world's largest).

It was estimated by County Flood Control Engineer E. C. Eaton that the county had already spent slightly in excess of \$3,000,000 toward the construction of the dam. Almost 700,000 cubic yards of earth and rock have already been removed from the dam site.

Said Engineer Eaton: "The rock necessary for the huge foundation simply isn't there. I don't want to reconstruct the dam about which there is any doubt as to its safety. My only suggestion as to the solution of the flood control problem in San Gabriel Canyon is the construction of a series of low dams higher up in the canyon. The county has now twelve sites under consideration upon which small barriers could be built."

With all hope seemingly shattered of ever erecting a high dam on the present site, Engineer Eaton thought that Pasadena held the only feasible site for a large dam in San Gabriel Canyon. He admitted, however, that it was useless for Los Angeles County to consider obtaining Pasadena's site—which is at Pine Canyon—for Pasadena recently voted a \$10,000,000 bond issue to build a dam 295 feet high to impound 64,200 acre feet of water for domestic use.

While County Supervisors ordered a halt to dam construction, consulting engineers and geologists continued to probe the dam foundation to determine whether a less colossal dam might be built at the site.

Meanwhile State Dam Engineer Edward Hyatt arrived on the scene, began a formal inspection on behalf of the State. As the week drew to a close County Supervisors awaited eagerly for Engineer Hyatt's findings, especially in view of the fact that the special county investigating committee of engineers left open, in its report, the question as to whether a lower dam than originally proposed might be built there.

While the two groups of engineers investigated, the Board of Supervisors turned its attention to the dam contractors—Fisher, Ross, MacDonald & Kane—who, since a fortnight ago (News Review, Oct. 14-20), have been disgruntled at delays, and who threatened to sue the county because their equipment, made idle by cessation of dam building while investigators examined the rock foundations, was not bringing in any returns. To quiet the contractors, the supervisors asked them to submit a schedule of damages they would incur by stopping work on the dam, at the same time pointing out that there is no legal grounds for a damage suit, since a clause in the contract provides that all work be done under the direction of Flood Control Engineer Eaton, this meaning that work can be stopped or started only upon authorization of Engineer Eaton.

"Red" Denouement

Large and pompous is Mrs. Kate Crane-Gartz of Alhambra, one-time heiress to the Crane (plumbing) millions. A capitalist herself, she has spent half her fortune aiding the "down-trodden, Labor, Socialism, in subsidizing the works of Upton Sinclair, soft-voiced but vituperative author-Socialist."

Most recent of Benefactress Gartz' activities has been to finance the trial, to furnish the bail for seven Communists on trial at San Bernardino for desecrating, last summer at Van Nuys, a "Red" flag for teaching Communist doctrine to children at the Yucapa camp. A fortnight ago, six of the seven Communists were found guilty of conspiracy against the Federal



ENGINEER E. C. EATON, PROF. C. F. TOLMAN & LABORER

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government, of displaying the "Red" flag contrary to California law. (News Review, Oct. 14-20).

Incensed at the decision of the San Bernardino court, Socialist Gartz last week wrote to Superior Judge Allison thus: "It was a great surprise to believers in justice that the young Communists were found guilty in your court... people who take the red flag as their emblem feel that there is plenty of room for improvement in the many shortcomings of the present order of society. Couldn't you tell as you listened to Yetta Stromberg, 19-year-old Los Angeles university student, that she was a young woman of high principles and ideals?"

In closing, Communist-sympathizer Gartz requested that the court "go easy with these young enthusiasts." Result: Superior Judge Allison, after reading carefully her letter and digesting the full import of its meaning, filed contempt of court proceedings against Mrs. Crane-Gartz, had County Clerk Barry Allison issue a warrant for her arrest.

Judge Allison's reason: The letter was "knowingly, willingly and unlawfully written for the purpose of unlawfully influencing, coercing and prejudicing" him in his decision on a motion for a new trial for the six Communists, sentence having been delayed upon the filing of the appeal.

More Jurisdiction

A new law made effective within the past two months give increased jurisdiction to townships with a population of 30,000 or more, and their justices of peace are now entitled to try cases involving sums up to \$1000. Formerly, justice courts could only handle cases involving sums up to \$300. First to take advantage of the new statute was Glendale when, last month, through City Attorney C. E. Hasbrouck, it appealed to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors asking for additional justices, declaring that its courts were overcrowded, that the new law would make them still more crowded. (News Review, Sept. 30-Oct. 6). Before any decision could be reached, however, it was first necessary to determine whether Glendale and eleven other Los Angeles County townships had the required population. Therefore the Board of Supervisors instructed County Counsel Mattison to take the case to the State Supreme Court, which was asked to decide upon the legality of the statute, to determine the populations.

Last week from the Supreme Court came the decision that nine out of the twelve townships in Los Angeles County each have a population of 30,000 or more and their justices of the peace are, under the new law, entitled to try civil cases involving not more than \$1000.

The townships which qualified: Beverly Hills, Glendale, Inglewood, Montebello, Pasadena, San Antonio (Huntington Park), San Gabriel (Alhambra), San Jose (Pomona), and Santa Monica. Not included as townships of 30,000 or more population necessary to give justices the \$1000 jurisdiction: Compton, Redondo and Whittier. Difficulty rose immediately after the passage of the new laws as to how to obtain a complete and correct census of the townships in question. A bill which assertedly provided a means for county supervisors to determine the population of the various townships, was vetoed by Governor Young. When the case was brought before the Supreme Court it appointed Leonard E. Thomas as a referee to determine the various populations, which task he completed last week.

Frustrated Voting

Last summer Tract-Owner Mrs. Mary K. Watson petitioned the City of Ventura for annexation of the six-acre tract; expected to vote on the issue early this month. Certain was she that the election's results would be satisfactory; the tract's only two residents were herself, her employee Harry I. Foster, and both wanted annexation. (News Review, Sept. 9-15).

Early this month the two voters started to make arrangements for the all-important day. Although they were the only two eligible to vote, they must open the polls at 7 a. m., not close them until 7 p. m. While one acted as election official, the other must cast his ballot; then change capacities. At 7 p. m., the ballot box must be opened, the votes officially counted, the result formally announced.

All ready were Owner Mary Watson and Employee Harry Foster for election day last week when City Attorney Walter Fourt announced that the State Legislature had amended annexation laws; as a result, the Watson tract election would be postponed six weeks. Again must Tract-Owner Watson petition for annexation, decide once more how she will vote, persuade Employee Foster to cast his ballot accordingly.

Park Proposals

A month ago, Huntington Beach's Tom Talbert, former Supervisor, present chairman of the Orange County G. O. P. Central Committee, urged quick action on the State park issue, advised the making of immediate decisions upon the proposed Orange County Park. (News Review, Sept. 30-Oct. 6).

A naturally, since the Huntington Beach location of the park is adjacent to the Huntington Beach

Ex-Supervisor Talbert suggested that 160 acres be added to Irvine Park by Orange County; that the County would bond for this project, also for the purchase of tract of land east of Huntington Beach to be used for the proposed State Park.

Talbert again pointed out that once Orange County has raised half the purchase price of the State Park, her responsibility ceases. The remainder of the money is furnished by the State, which develops the land into a park, supplies funds for its upkeep. Unless action is taken shortly, Talbert said, no suitable territory will be available; already has most of the preferred beach property been purchased by private interests.

In accordance with the State's \$6,000,000 bond issue for State parks, approved by voters in the 1928 election, machinery was in motion last week at Sacramento for the acquisition of two parks in Southern California, as well as two in the North.

At San Diego, the State Park Board is endeavoring to acquire San Diego County's world famous Silver Strand which connects Coronado Island with the mainland. The cost of this project would be approximately \$1,000,000, of which sum the State would pay one-half, the county the other.

Other Southern California projects which the State board is said to be considering are: (1) the purchase of Mount San Jacinto; (2) beach sites north and south of Los Angeles.

Fire Blame

When, last month, a devastating fire burned and did \$1,000,000 worth of damage in the Sulphur mountains, near Santa Paula, Ventura County fire wardens sought to find out the perpetrators. Last week, after a prolonged investigation, County Fire Warden Walter F. Merrick and Supervisor Nash Bouldin of the Santa Barbara National Forest completed their survey and issued a report.

Said the report: We find that the fire originated near a point at which a transmission line of the Southern California Edison Company broke on September 16. From all the evidence obtainable we believe the most probable cause of the fire was the breaking of said line... The Southern California Edison has declined to admit liability for origin of the fire, but as a matter of co-operation has agreed to contribute toward the expense involved in fighting the fire, both to the Santa Barbara National Forest and the Ventura county fire district.

Therefore, Southern California Edison will pay to the two groups the sum of \$794,385, its official

Power Allotment

Eager for their share of Boulder Dam power, representatives from Southern California communities, companies accrued to Washington last week. Reason: They wished to be present when Secretary of the Interior Ray Lyman Wilbur submitted plans for the allocation of power; wished to place their bids for some of it.

Most pertinent among activities at the meeting was the reading of three alternative plans for the allocation of power. Recommended by Commissioner of Reclamation and Irrigation Dr. Elwood Mead, the plans were put forward to the representatives by Secretary Wilbur himself. The recommended plans:

(1) That a contract be executed with the Metropolitan Water District and the City of Los Angeles for the entire power available, with provision in the contract for release of 35 per cent to the State and other applicants, such as the Southern California Edison Co., to whom it later may be allocated by the Secretary.

(2) That a contract be executed with the Metropolitan Water District and the City of Los Angeles for 65 per cent of the power available for use in that district, the City of Los Angeles and other municipalities in Southern California, with provision for later allocation of the remaining 35 per cent to States and other applicants.

(3) That a contract be executed with the Metropolitan Water District, the City of Los Angeles, and the Southern California Edison Company for the entire power available to the Metropolitan Water District to be entitled to as much power as may be necessary to pump water for domestic purposes (more than half the entire output) with a contract provision for release of power to be allocated by the Secretary to other applicants.

Probably most favored of all these tentative schemes was the latter. Under such a plan Secretary Wilbur thought the large interests could get together, form a "unit organization" through which all of them could deal jointly with the government in the development and operation of the Boulder Dam project. To such a "unit organization" the government is prepared to offer power at the present 3 mills per kilowatt hour, a price comparing favorably to the lowest production costs in the private power field. Under these terms the United States would construct the dam, outlet works, power plant building, power tunnels. The lessees of power would buy, install and maintain all machinery and equipment. Operation of the dam and reservoir would be a government responsibility.

Los Angeles and Metropolitan District representatives declared the price and plans were suitable, agreeable.

From power prices the conferees next turned to water prices. Commissioners normally draw off water from the Boulder Dam Act decreed that no charge should be made for irrigation waters used in the Imperial and Coachella valleys. (This provision was made because these valleys normally draw off water from the Colorado, and the Boulder Dam would curtail the river's flow). Irrigation water prices proposed by Dr. Mead: 1) 50 cents per acre-foot for water diverted by the Metropolitan Water District below power outlets of the dam; 2) 10 cents per acre-foot for irrigation purposes; 3) 50 cents per acre-foot for domestic purposes. Under these terms the government expects to realize a return of \$375,000 annually for water used by the City of Los Angeles.

One dark cloud loomed over an otherwise fairly clear horizon during last week's conference. While under power plan No. 3 the City of Los Angeles and the Southern California Edison Co. and the Southern California Edison Co. would combine for joint purchase and distribution of power, it was doubted whether the two groups could agree upon a common contracting and working arrangement as to how much of the power each is to receive. The Edison company was expected to contend vigorously that in the distribution of Boulder Dam electrical energy the present ratio applying in the Southern California market should be adhered to. Under this ratio the Edison Company would be entitled to control 63.2 per cent of all power from the dam distributed in Southern California.

On the other hand, the Boulder Dam Act gives the City of Los Angeles and the municipalities of the Metropolitan Water District a pre-